

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIALCOUNTRY Czechoslovakia

REPORT

TOPIC Infantry School in Lipnik nad Bečvou

EVALUATION

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REMARKS

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This is UNEVALUATED

1. On 31 May 1953, the infantry school in Lipnik nad Bečvou (P 50/U 14) ('Pchotni Uciliste Lipnik nad Bečvou') was subordinate directly to the Schools Department of the Ministry of National Defense. The school which served to train regular officer candidates was located in the Dukla Barracks ('Dukelske kasárny') on the northeastern border of Lipnik and north of the highway to Hranice (P 50/U 25). The buildings of the former military academy in Hranice housed the artillery school.
2. Subordinate to the school headquarters which included the instruction staff were the officer candidates who were organized into battalions, a reserve officers' retraining course, a headquarters company, and a motor transport company. There were no special instruction troops.
3. In the spring of 1953, the school had three battalions of three companies, each of which numbered 120 officer candidates and one mortar battalion of three companies which also consisted of officer candidates. The officer candidates, who were 18 to 35 years old, were recruited from graduates of secondary schools, pupils of Jana Zizky schools, soldiers who had completed one year of active service, regular MCUs and pupils who came from special premilitary training institutes for officer candidates. No detailed information on the latter institutes was available. Officer candidates who came from reserve officer schools joined the trainees in the second class of every course of instruction. After completing the two years' instruction course, the trainees were discharged as lieutenants. During these two years they could be promoted to the rank of master sergeant (Starsina). All trainees were Czechs or Slovaks. While on duty, the trainees of the school wore normal infantry uniforms. While on leave, they wore uniforms which were made to measure of a better cloth. The epaulets, which mounted no arms insignia and whose background was red, were bordered with golden braid. Trainees of the first class wore one gold stripe and those of the second class two gold stripes, 6 cm long and 1 cm wide on their left sleeves about 10 cm above the cuffs.
4. The retraining course to which source belonged served the purpose of training reserve officers as company and battalion leaders according to Soviet

25X1

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL/

25X1

- 2 -

principles of training and combat. Since there was not enough room in the Dukelske Kasarny for the trainees who numbered about 200 officers, they were quartered on the 2d and 3d floors of the former high school on the northern border of the city, on the west side of the road to Bohuslavsky (R 50/0 05), south of the railroad line. Another course of the same type had been held there before, and another was scheduled to follow. The course was organized into five platoons each of which formed a separate class and had its own classroom. About 20 percent of the trainees were members of the [CP]. Pursuant to existing orders the course included a [CP] organization under the management of Reserve Junior Lieutenant Josef Vranstik. This Communist party organization was rather inactive. About 50 percent of the trainees were anti-communists and, in case of war, many would seize the first opportunity to desert.

5. The headquarters company of the school included the entire auxiliary personnel such as clerks, orderlies, guards, craftsmen, cooks, etc. The motor transport company which numbered about 60 men had 3 sedans, 15 Tatra-III trucks, 15 Praga R4 trucks, 10 HAI trucks, and 5 Jawa 250 motorcycles.
6. Subjects of instruction and training at the school included tactics, artillery employment, employment of the tank area, signal service, engineer service, chemical service, marksmanship, topography and physical training. There was one director of training and several instruction officers for each of these subjects. Only one instruction officer was available for each subject of minor importance. So-called cabinets, i.e. rooms where instruction aids and manuals, orders, items of equipment, models, photographs and other pictures of all types, schemes and drawings were kept, were available. In each cabinet there was an instruction officer who gave the explanations desired.

25X1

CONFIDENTIAL/

Page Denied

CONFIDENTIAL/

- 4 -

8. Training in the retraining course focused on theoretical and practical tactics, marksmanship training and political indoctrination. The other subjects of instruction were also regularly dealt with, but were considered of secondary importance. In addition to the standard training program, lectures were held on the Soviet Army organization and tactical employment of motorized and mechanized infantry units, automotive maintenance and service at a motor transport company, medical service in case of war, supply service, and military correspondence.¹
9. The units of the infantry school held major exercises in the area of the Libava (P 50/O 07) troop training grounds. The school mainly used the Slavkov (Schlock, P 50/O 13) - Kanosov (Prusinowitz, P 50/O 13) - Kozlov (Kozlau, P 50/O 13) area. The headquarters of the Libava troop training grounds was located in the building of the former townhall in Mesto Libava. The area around Velka Strelna (Gross Waltersdorf, P 50/O 06) was used as a training ground and firing range for tank troops. The apartment houses in the town of Neprivazi (Epperswagen, P 50/N 96), which were still usable, quartered several courses of instruction such as a snipers' course, an observers' course, a partisans' course, and a training course for combat in towns. A field firing range for infantry units was located in the area around Jestrabi (Habicht, P 50/O 05). The area around Varhost (Haslicht, P 50/O 05) was used as a training ground for chemical combat training. An artillery range was located in the area around Milovany (Milbes, P 50/O 06). Once, tents and excavated bunkers were observed in the area north of Mesto Libava.² The training ground in the station area which was used by the infantry school was located on the northeastern border of Lipnik, between the railroad line and the way to Jezernice (P 50/O 15). This ground included the improved defense sector of a platoon with fire trench, communication trenches, sleeping bunker, gasproof shelter, command post of the platoon leader, emplacements for heavy machine guns and 57-mm AT guns and wire entanglements. Located in this area were also model structures of various bunker types such as excavated bunkers (Zemljanky), quartering bunkers (Partyzanky), and Indian huts constructed of long poles. Another section of the training ground was used for the training of telephone operators, radio operators, medical squads and flame thrower squads. An athletic field (Polni Telocvicna) was also available. There were two obstacle courses. Practices in the one course served to train the men in the overcoming of field obstacles such as brick walls, high walls, gangplanks, deep trenches, etc. The second course was used to train infantrymen especially for the final stage of assault and penetration. On this course, the trainee had to crawl over a distance of 50 meters under a wire net, 40 cm high, subsequently to run a distance of 60 meters, and finally to penetrate. During this race, the trainee had to cross two trenches, throw two hand grenades and hit three dummy figures with his bayonet.¹
10. New weapons the participants of the retraining course were shown included the recoilless rifle (Pancorovka), the Tarasnice (an AT weapon similar to the German Army bazooka), and the model PTA-57 AT gun (Protitankovy kanon 57). The Tarasnice had a caliber of 100 mm, was 180 cm long, and weighed 26 kilograms. Because the Tarasnice had two supporting wheels, the aiming of the loaded weapon could be effected under limited exertion. On marches the weapon was loaded on a cart which was drawn by a single horse. The crew of

CONFIDENTIAL/

CONFIDENTIAL

- 5 -

the weapon included six men, namely, the crew leader, the gunner, the assistant gunner, two ammunition bearers, and one draughtsman. The weapon including the crew was called "Tarasnicova Skupina". Two Skupiny formed a squad. Two squads were organized into one platoon. Source fired with the Tarasnice at a dummy tank, 1,500 meters distant, and said that the accuracy of fire was excellent. The rearward darting flame was about 10 meters long. White smoke was observed at the moment of discharge, while dark smoke appeared over the point of burst. The bursting charge consisted of cast tritol. Only one type of projectiles was known. German Army gas masks with training filters were still used during all chemical combat practices. The instruction officer said that new Czech gas masks were being developed.

1. Comment. The infantry officer school in Lipnik and the artillery officer school in Hranice are known and are also confirmed by other information until May 1953. No recent information comparable with the present detailed statements is available. These statements generally agree with those made by Deserter Kacerik.

25X1

2. Comment. Mesto Libava is the training grounds of the IV Army Corps in Brno. It is known that the Slavkov area is used mainly by the infantry school in Lipnik.

25X1

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